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ABSTRACT

Speech communication can make a difference in the teaching of English Language Arts and in improving basic teacher communication skills. A wealth of research indicates that instruction in speaking is not only important in itself but also highly influential in the development of other language arts competencies. Preparation in both English and speech communication can help English teachers incorporate the following items into lessons: (1) skills in both classroom and small group discussion; (2) functional communication competencies and good listening skills; (3) methods for helping students become more competent at each stage of development in oral and written communication; and (4) skills in diagnosing and assessing student strengths and weaknesses in both written and oral communication. Preparation in speech communication can often be a deciding factor in getting an English teaching position in which the teaching or coaching of forensics or debate is desired. Furthermore, a knowledge of speech communication (for example, simple tips on language delivery in the classroom) can improve teaching in all subject areas. (Six appendixes include communication charts for writing and speaking and certification guidelines for speech and English.) (SR)

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SPEECH COMMUNICATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

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of the
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SPEECH COMMUNICATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

All teachers indirectly assume a responsibility for providing an effective communication environment because teaching relies heavily on the medium of language. An average teacher spends approximately 38 hours of talking each week and speaks between 125-150 words per minute. It is evident how important it is for teachers to integrate both oral and written skills into current lesson and unit plans.

In this paper I discuss how speech communication can enhance the teaching of English Language Arts; in addition I outline a few primary reasons why a knowledge of speech communication can play an important role in the preparation of teachers of any subject.

Speech and the Teaching of English

What's the Problem with the English Teacher's Traditional Speech Unit?

At some point each of us can recall, either as a teacher or a student, walking through the halls of a high school and peeking into an English class where a speech unit was taking place. The room was filled with objects for demonstration speeches, students were leaning over podiums, and the school was experiencing an increase in absenteeism. While the English teacher's main objectives were being met - students using fewer vocalized pauses, better organization skills, and attention getting beginnings - a major problem was and unfortunately still is, that when the speech unit ends, the class returns to "normal". In other words, there is too obvious and great a distinction between how the class operates when a speech unit is taking place and other units. This is unfair to students because they need to be aware of how communication has a lifetime application. Speaking, in short, is language in action in its most common form. This, therefore means more than overcoming stagefright, practicing simulated job interviews or demonstrating a process. While these are all valuable lessons, areas such as proxemics, interpersonal skills, evaluative feedback, and nonverbal communication are important for high school students to learn about as well (Steele 1986).

How Can Oral Communication Help Student Writing?

A wealth of research indicates that instruction in speaking is not only important in itself, but also highly influential in the development of other language arts competencies. We write and we speak to inform, persuade, tell stories, and express feelings.

Positive interpersonal relationships between teachers and students are the foundation for effective oral and written communication learning. Developing these skills requires both knowledge and practice. Preparation in both English and speech communication can help a teacher to initiate speaking program goals and incorporate into lessons:

- . techniques for 'motivating students' to write as well as to speak;
- . skills in handling both classroom and small group discussions;

- . methods for helping students develop functional communication competencies and good listening skills;
- . methods for helping students become more competent at each stage of development in oral and written communication; and
- . skills in diagnosing and assessing student strengths and weaknesses in both written and oral communication.

Let us consider how written language and oral language have the same direct relation to meaning, and direct attention to ways teachers can present both effectively (See Appendices A, B and C).

Oral communication includes a setting (time and place) and a mode (e.g., conversation, speech, debate). Written communication also has a mode or form that prescribes the design of the composition (e.g., letter, essay, poem, news article, narrative, etc.). Oftentimes writing is taught as a 3-stage process - prewriting, composing, and rewriting. Too often a 4th stage - sharing, is left out and yet it is integral to the process because it gives significance to the writing. In more descriptive terms: (1) Prewriting activities would include students identifying the audience and the purpose, both of which direct the message. (2) Composing activities would include students refining and developing this main idea and then organizing the material into a readable draft. (3) Rewriting activities would assist students in refining and revising the draft into a polished paper. (4) The sharing activities would help students to gain a sense of competency and delight in their ability to communicate through the written word.

For the past ten or more years, talking about the "writing process" is the "in thing"; however students also need to recognize that all communication is a process. When reading and writing are integrated with speaking and listening, the student is encouraged to view communication as a purposeful activity in which speakers and writers address flesh and blood listeners or readers. The face to face nature of oral communication reminds students of the transactional nature of discourse (Blankenship and Stelzner 1979, p. 1).

Writing then, should not be taught in isolation to speaking; speaking should not be taught in isolation to writing. One way to improve narrative writing is to have students tell their stories orally first. This technique will teach students to write as they talk. Students should be able to write about themselves and in doing so they will discover who they are. It is critical, however, that teachers teach students how to use logic in their writing and speaking. A great many of our misunderstandings occur because people do not know how to express themselves in a logical manner. A most common fault in students' work - oral or written - is that they refuse to support their ideas with facts, examples, illustrations, comparisons or statistics.

Another way to help students improve their writing is to have them read passages aloud from novels and short stories. Such exercises can serve as an appropriate pre-writing strategy.

Oral Communication and Small Group Work

Another area in which coursework in speech communication can enhance the teaching of English is in small group work and discussion. Oral communication

is a process that takes on significance for students when they discover how to make language work for them as they interact with others in everyday situations. In order to grow in oral competency, students must practice conversations in a variety of situations, analyze the responses of others, examine the ways others communicate in similar situations, and make informed judgments about the effectiveness of their messages (Woods 1977). The ability to work effectively in a group develops slowly for students. They have difficulty in the skills of staying on the topic, reaching a cooperative goal, managing distractions, and making effective contributions. As a result, cooperative learning has taken a lead in teaching strategies in order to assist students in improving these skills. Group work can be particularly helpful in peer revision of student essays as well as in the critical analyses of novels and short stories. Also, combining a novel or short story unit and gender communication is a great opportunity for using groups. Since teachers can be considered the primary agents for effecting change, a way to increase gender awareness would be to move beyond just modeling gender free language and assisting students in their gender free speaking and writing by including gender communication activities. In such a unit. Students working in small groups could discuss how the main characters in the story would differ were they to be of a different gender, and consider how time has allowed some of the stereotypes in the stories to be antiquated as a result of the changes in our society. Group projects might consist of students rewriting the stories by changing the sex of the main characters (Nelson 1990). A teacher's knowledge in how groups work and having methods available for orientating students with group exercises allows students to work productively and harmoniously in groups.

Making the English Teacher's Speech Unit Better

Let's now go back to the speech unit in that English language arts class. As I had indicated, the major problem with such a unit is that oftentimes the concepts presented are isolated to that unit and the teacher and students do not continue to practice these concepts throughout the year. Another problem too can be in the way the speech unit is presented. When the unit is introduced, students should be encouraged to consider all the reasons why someone makes a speech. Also, a list of all the different types of speeches including those to inform, to persuade, to entertain, to demonstrate, to introduce, etc. should be made and discussed. Like essayists, speech writers must know the purpose, the audience and the content to be presented. Requiring students to attempt different purposes will offer speech givers and audience the variety necessary to keep things interesting in both the preparation stage and the presentation stage. Naturally, students will need assistance during speech preparation, and a push to stick to their "purpose" and to model good organization skills. A reminder that they already know about the introduction, body, and conclusion from their writing activities will not make the task seem so awesome.

In addition, it is necessary for students to learn about how language can change from audience to audience and how it must be adapted. They need to ask themselves what interests and experiences their audience might have had as well as consider the best approach to what they want to tell them. The class should role play the type of audience indicated by the speaker. In doing so, the class as an "audience" also has a task or responsibility during each speech; and this places them in a more active, participative role than a passive one.

Techniques in delivery also need to be presented in the unit. Nonverbal communication including the areas of proxemics and kinesics should be talked about. Students enjoy activities that demonstrate how an awareness of nonverbal communication can enhance a presentation and hopefully they will be able to carry the knowledge gained here into everyday practice.

Evaluation is yet another skill that students should be actively engaged in, but it is oftentimes overlooked. When each student presents a speech, class members should analyze how the speech fulfills the purpose selected, just as they should in peer editing of writing. Students should feel comfortable giving positive and negative feedback both orally and in writing as long as it is constructive and will assist in helping the student improve in the next speech.

Because students are often reluctant to evaluate one another, teachers need to discuss why evaluation is so important and how it encourages and stimulates critical listening skills. Teachers should have a prepared evaluation form and it should be reviewed with the class prior to the beginning day of speeches. If a positive class atmosphere exists, good measurement tools are used, and the students' knowledge of teacher expectations has been realized - then a teacher should get good results.

As in writing, revision is a common practice, so too should time be planned out for redoing speeches. Once the skills of purpose and audience have been understood, content can be emphasized as well as the inclusion of the class comments for the next go around. To be an effective writer, you must write; to be an effective speaker, you must open your mouth and speak. Too often teachers do not provide students with the opportunity to give a speech again because they think that somehow the criticism will sink in and be retained for future reference. I recall a comment I heard at a Wisconsin Communication Association meeting a few years back. "Practice doesn't make perfect; it makes permanent." Students who are deprived of evaluation or of the opportunity to remedy their weaknesses will continue to make the same mistakes again and again.

In the real world, students communicate for different reasons and with a variety of people. In the integrated language arts classroom, communication is not teacher directed, but rather students communicate with each other individually and in small groups. It seems critical for teachers to build speech communication into their year long program and not through isolated drill, or students may lose sight of many such skills as: language, purpose, audience, nonverbal communication and evaluation.

Wisconsin's Way of Acknowledging the Need for Language Arts Integration

The Wisconsin Guide to Curriculum Planning in the Language Arts (DPI 1986) places a very strong emphasis on oral communication skills, especially listening and speaking. The guide recommends that all language arts skills and concepts be learned in a communication context, thereby suggesting that through participation in realistic, active oral and written communication, appropriate grammatical usage and communication skills can best be learned.

While the guide recommends integration of all language arts skills whenever possible, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has decided that discrete courses which emphasize certain skills such as public speaking, interpersonal

communication or debate must only be taught by teachers certified in speech. Similarly, only those teachers certified in English are allowed to teach courses in literature and composition. (See Appendix D and E for current Wisconsin standards for teaching majors and minors in English and in Speech Communication and Appendix F for courses which currently meet those standards at Ripon College.)

For this reason, we strongly encourage students at Ripon who are interested in teaching communication arts to select a teaching major and minor combination in Speech and English. As a result, these future teachers will be better equipped to teach both oral and written skills in our junior highs and high schools tomorrow.

Who Will Coach That Team?

It is particularly important to point out here, however, that a student who pursues only a teaching major in English had best plan at the very least to take coursework in the teaching and coaching of forensics and debate. More often than not a deciding factor of who gets that teaching position is determined by the candidate with either personal experience or a working knowledge in forensics or debate. Very often English teachers are the coaches or assistant coaches. As a former high school debate coach who had not participated in high school or college debate, the activities course I had taken was extremely helpful; at least I knew what sources to turn to on the occasions when I was totally and utterly clueless as to how to proceed. While other coaches can be helpful, they are the competition, and besides, one needs to know what questions to ask before anyone can be of help. Forensics and debate coaches are responsible for having a theory base and that means doing the homework.

Speech Communication Affects the Teaching of All Subjects

For speech educators, communication skills and the teaching process fit like hand in glove; to others the relationship of communication to teaching is not as obvious. As a result, there are still teachers coming into the profession without any coursework in speech communication. To wait for students to student teach and then find deficiencies, only results in a tremendous burden for the students caught in this dilemma and the college and school supervisors who must attempt to remedy the situation as the clock ticks away.

Speech communication departments can play an important role in producing better teachers by initiating discussions with education departments and other departments on how a knowledge of speech communication can improve teaching. These few tips alone which most specifically address method of delivery can get a teacher off to a good start:

- . Language that is used in delivery must be common to both the speaker and listener; therefore the teacher needs to select words and expressions that are understood by students, regardless of their age.
- . Language is the most important medium through which a teacher can communicate a message. Therefore the message must be delivered with clarity and brevity as well as with conviction. To make a convincing presentation, the teacher needs to display an assertive and confident speaking voice and manner. Proper poise and appropriate dress are necessary.

- . The message should be delivered in a provocative and exciting manner so that the most uninterested student will become motivated to listen. A droning and monotonous voice quality will put students to sleep.
- . Proper grammatical usage, correct pronunciation and careful enunciation are necessary for effective delivery. How can students respect a teacher who says, "Don't cha know" or "Now we're gonna"?
- . The most interesting teacher is one who can use a conversational approach to delivery.
- . Appropriately placed pauses and inflections are part and parcel to effective delivery. Certain ideas need to be emphasized. A teacher can prepare the students for these with a pause or changing pitch or tone.
- . If a teacher wants to convince the students that the message is intended for them, the teacher must have good eye contact. Appropriate facial expressions allow the teacher to make his or her students emote feelings similar to those of the teacher.
- . Physical movements and gestures accentuate delivery; however certain mannerisms can distract the students and be annoying.

In addition, there are two other very important communication factors that often get overlooked in teacher training programs. First, recent studies demonstrate that the listening power of students is extremely weak. Teachers must make a concerted effort to improve the skills of listening. Speech faculty can assist in providing materials and activities for improving listening skills. Passivity among educators regarding the teaching of listening results in an inferior educational product. Second, twenty per cent of the population is communication apprehensive; therefore almost every classroom has students who are apprehensive about communication. A knowledge regarding the nature of apprehension as well as its causes and effects is important. A lack of knowledge may severely aggravate its seriousness rather than help to overcome it.

Recommendations

It is necessary today for colleges with teacher preparation programs to encourage interdepartmental meetings and discussions in order to outline a course of study keyed for achieving a common goal; that being that future teachers will be taught the skills to help them become effective communicators. And, district administrators need to provide in-service programs for their teachers which are taught by speech communication specialists to improve teacher communication skills and develop methods for improving their students' oral as well as written communication.

Teacher training programs in the past rarely gave as much emphasis to the communication base of teaching as they did to sociological and psychological

foundations of education. Nevertheless four types of speaking occur in the school setting: interpersonal communication, small group communication, lecture, and class discussion. Integrating reading, writing, listening, and speaking when designing curricula and planning instruction needs to be encouraged in the teaching of the language arts and other subjects.

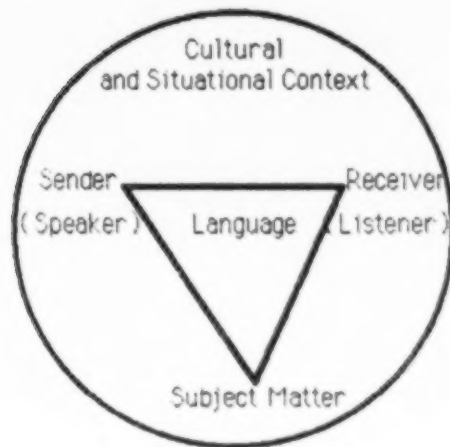
Regardless of the subject, teachers should provide students with the opportunity to make language work for them in everyday conversation, in small group interactions and in public speaking occasions. Doing so will enable students to recognize listeners' needs; use non-verbal factors in their own speaking; evaluate their messages for accuracy and effectiveness; encourage constructive feedback; and become responsible in their use of freedom of speech.

The ideas presented here merely skim the surface for enhancing the teaching of English Language Arts, and improving basic teacher communication skills. It is hoped that more ideas can be generated and a more extensive repertoire of approaches developed. Speech communication can make a difference.

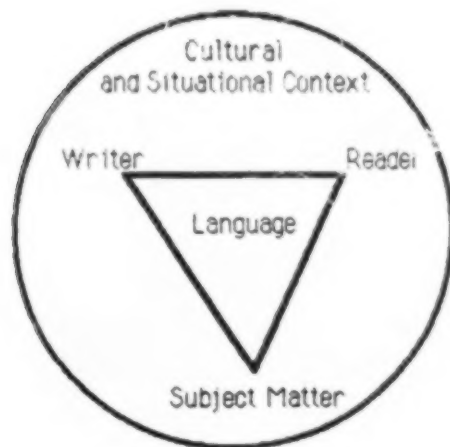
Appendix A

**WRITTEN LANGUAGE HAS THE SAME DIRECT RELATION
TO MEANING AS ORAL LANGUAGE DOES.**

Communication Triangle: Speaking



Communication Triangle: Writing



Appendix B

COMMUNICATION PURPOSES: WRITING AND SPEAKING

Speaking	Writing
Expressing feeling <----->	Expressive
Ritualizing <----->	Formulaic
Imagining <----->	Imaginative/Literary
Informing <----->	Informative
Controlling <----->	Persuasive

Wisconsin Guide to Curriculum Planning in the Language Arts 1986, p 24.

Expressing Feelings: Communication acts that express and respond to feelings.

Expressive Writing: Loosely structured and exploratory.

Ritualizing: Communication acts that facilitate social interaction and maintain social relationships.

Formulaic Writing: Highly structured, conforms to a specific situation or event. Its purpose is to standardize communication forms and to satisfy social needs.

Imagining: Communication acts whereby participants are cast in imaginary situations (role playing, story telling, fantasizing).

Imaginative/Literary Writing: Purpose is to delight and entertain by placing emphasis on the language itself.

Informing: Communication acts whereby the participants' function is to seek or offer information. (questioning, justifying, demonstrating, explaining).

Informative Writing: Emphasizes the subject matter by explaining or clarifying the content to the reader.

Controlling: Communication acts whereby the participants' dominant function is to control behavior (commanding, ordering, suggesting, persuading, arguing).

Persuasive Writing: Purpose is to change or influence the reader's point of view.

Appendix C

STUDENTS CAN PROFIT FROM EXPERIENCES SPANNING THE FULL RANGE OF SPEAKING AND WRITING STYLES.

SPEECH: whispering sweet family conversation; business talk; keynote speeches; parliamentary debate;
 nothings; joking about party talk teacher talk public lectures diplomatic policy
 old times statements

STYLE: INTIMATE _____ CASUAL _____ CONSULTATIVE _____ FORMAL _____ FROZEN _____

WRITING: journal writing; friendly letters business memos; academic essays; legal documents;
passing notes in class some contemporary fiction (e.g. Richard Brautigan) journalistic writing technical manuals scientific reports

(Martin Joos)

The Talking and Writing Series, K-12: Successful Classroom Practices.
 From *Talking and Writing: Building Communication Competence*.
 Rubin and Eanor (1983)

Appendix D

SPEECH: A professional education program leading to certification in speech shall meet the following standards:

(1) The program shall require study of historical and contemporary theories and models of communication and their application to a variety of oral communication processes including:

(a) Function of the individual as both an effective speaker and listener in communication.

(b) Sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, and nonverbal factors which affect oral communication.

(c) Context variables such as occasion, setting, purpose, culture, audience, gender, and subject and their impact upon oral communication.

(2) The program shall require study of the functions of communication in social, personal, and professional life including:

(a) Emphasis on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, organizational, public, and mass communication levels.

(b) Emphasis on the role of interpersonal communication in relationship development, work relationships, and sociocultural activities.

(c) Emphasis on the uses of oral communication in informative, persuasive, ritualistic, and affective interaction.

(d) Emphasis on the development and delivery of oral communication acts.

(e) Emphasis on the development of effective listening skills.

(3) The program shall require study of the criticism of oral communication including:

(a) Emphasis on the theories of rhetorical, group, and interpersonal criticism.

(b) Emphasis on styles and modes of oral communication criticism.

(c) Emphasis on the use of criticism as a means of improving oral communication.

(d) Emphasis on the nature of logical, ethical, and emotional appeals.

(e) Emphasis on criticism as an instrument of improving reasoning and decision making processes.

(f) The program shall require study of various electronic media of oral communication including:

(a) The nature and effects of media.

(b) The manner in which different media enable and constrain communication.

(5) The program shall require study of responsible oral communication including:

(a) The ethical responsibilities of oral communication.

(b) The rights and responsibilities associated with free speech in a democratic society.

(6) The program shall require study and experiences with the development, management, and evaluation of curricular, cocurricular and extracurricular activities including:

(a) Interpersonal communication, public communication, oral interpretation, small group communication, organizational communication, and mass communication.

(b) The directing of student experiences in debate or forensics.

Appendix E

ENGLISH: A professional education program leading to certification in English shall meet the following standards:

- (1) The program shall require study of language including the following:
 - (a) The structure and history of the English language including traditional and modern grammars.
 - (b) Various personal, social, and communicative purposes of language.
 - (c) The processes whereby individuals acquire, understand, and use language.
 - (d) The interrelatedness of the language arts, recognizing the complementary features of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- (2) The program shall require study of written communication including the following:
 - (a) Writing as a process including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.
 - (b) Classical and contemporary rhetorical theories regarding aims and forms of discourse, cultural and situational contexts, and considerations regarding the reader.
 - (c) Writing for a variety of purposes including expressive, imaginative, informational, and persuasive; and writing for a variety of readers.
 - (d) Various approaches to evaluating writing.
- (3) The program shall require study of literature including the following:
 - (a) A representative body of American, English, and world literature including contemporary literature, non-Western literature, adolescent literature, and the literature of minority groups of the United States.
 - (b) Literary genres including forms of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry.
 - (c) Representative works of one or more major writers including Shakespeare.
 - (d) Traditional contemporary approaches to literary analysis and criticism.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Appendix F

English Teaching Major 36 credits

- . Literature & Composition
- . Another intensive writing course
- . American Literature to 1850/or
American Literature 1850-1900
- . British Literature: Beginnings
to 1800
- . Shakespeare, the Comedies/or
Shakespeare, the Tragedies/or
Shakespeare, the Histories
- . One course in British Literature
after 1800
- . Senior Seminar
- . Senior Portfolio
- . Linguistics
- . English Methods

English Teaching Minor 26 credits

- . Literature & Composition
- . Another intensive writing course
- . American Literature to 1850/or
American Literature 1850-1900
- . Shakespeare, the Comedies/or
Shakespeare, the Tragedies/or
Shakespeare, the Histories
- . British Literature: Beginnings
to 1800
- . Linguistics
- . English Methods

Speech Teaching Major 37 credits

- . Techniques of Forensics/or
Techniques of Debate
- . Public Speaking
- . Interpersonal & Small Group
Communication
- . Mass Media
- . History & Development of
Rhetorical & Communication
Theory
- . Organizational Communication
- . Persuasion
- . Directing Debate & Forensic
Activities
- . Senior Thesis
- . Senior Seminar
- . Plus 6 credit hours from the
following:
Oral Interpretation/or
Departmental Studies/or
American Public Address/or
Rhetorical Criticism
- . Teaching of Speech
- . Ethics

Speech Teaching Minor 24 credits

- . Techniques of Forensics/or
Techniques of Debate
- . Public Speaking
- . Interpersonal & Small Group
Communication
- . Mass Media
- . History & Development of
Rhetorical & Communication
Theory
- . Directing Debate & Forensic
Activities
- . Plus 6 credit hours from the
following:
Oral Interpretation/or
Departmental Studies/or
Organizational Communication/or
Persuasion
- . American Public Address
- . Teaching of Speech

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